

CONSUMPTION BEHAVIOR OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES
AMONG ATLANTA NEGROES

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

It is now firmly established that different ethnic groups within the United States display noticeably different patterns of alcoholic beverage consumption. These data, collected by anthropologists and sociologists, indicate that religion and traditions with which behavior patterns are so often interwoven play an important role in the formation of these drinking practices.¹ These practices, usually, range from simple intoxication to the extremes of drunkenness and alcoholism. Surprisingly, these relative differences among the various groups seem to persist with remarkable tenacity over the generations.² Collectively, such facts lend a special significance to the study of ethnic and religious group drinking patterns.

Problem.--Considerable effort has been made to estimate the overall prevalence of drinking behavior in our society, but there has been little systematic data concerning the consumption of alcoholic beverages among Negroes. The scarcity of such knowledge gives rise to this study. This study is, therefore, designed to obtain formal information about the drinking behavior among Negroes. It begins with the usage of alcoholic beverages among Atlanta Negroes. Also, the study has been designed to give some insight into the attitudes toward the use of such

¹David J. Pittman and Charles R. Snyder, Society, Culture and Drinking Patterns (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1962), p. 154.

²Ibid.

beverages.

The following specific question and sub-questions serve to delimit our focus of intent:

What are the patterns of alcoholic beverage consumption among Atlanta Negroes?

1. About how often do they consume alcoholic beverages?
2. What types or kinds of alcoholic beverage do they prefer?
3. About how much of each type or kind of alcoholic beverage do they consume at one sitting?
4. Where do they consume most of their alcoholic beverages?
5. When do they consume most of their alcoholic beverages?
6. What are the main reasons given for the consumption of alcoholic beverages?

Leading Ideas.--The leading ideas involved in this study are based on the following sub-hypotheses: Most of the alcoholic beverage consumption among Atlanta Negroes takes place in the company of friends on the weekend; (1) they consume some type of alcoholic beverage at least three times a week; (2) beer is the most frequent type of alcoholic beverage consumed; (3) most of the users of alcoholic beverages consume at least three to six bottles of beer, three to four drinks of whiskey, or three to six glasses of wine at one sitting; (4) most of the consumption of alcoholic beverages is done in the home on weekends; (5) "to be sociable" is the most frequent reason given for the consumption of alcoholic beverages.

Data and Method.--In the foregoing sections some of the hypotheses which seem to offer the most promising leads for research on Negro

drinking practices have been outlined. They will serve to delineate the actual drinking ways among Atlanta Negroes. An important aim of the present study, therefore, is to provide a sociological description of Negro drinking behavior in Atlanta.

In collecting data concerning the problem and hypotheses under investigation, several research techniques were utilized. Intensive effort was made to review all pertinent published materials concerning the consumption patterns of alcoholic beverages. Special efforts were made to cover all literature which showed a possibility of, directly or indirectly, shedding light on the drinking patterns of various ethnic groups in the United States.

The basic material for this study was obtained from a questionnaire schedule administered to a random sample of 172 Atlanta Negro household heads. The rationale for sampling procedures and the techniques used in obtaining data from this source warrant further consideration.

To insure representation of a population showing a wide range of socio-cultural characteristics, an approximately random sample of Atlanta Negroes was developed, using the 1960 United States Census Tract PHC (1)-8 and the City Block Series HC (3)-118 as the basic references. To develop this sample, a list of tracts was compiled by selecting all those in the Atlanta area with ninety per cent or more Negro inhabitants. The tracts were then arranged in three socio-economic categories according to median income. The two middle income groups were then selected from each socio-economic category. This process resulted in the selection of six tracts from which smaller units were selected. These units consisted of the two most populous blocks in each of the six tracts.

This resulted in the selection of twelve city blocks. From these twelve blocks, every fourth tenant dwelling was selected in search of prospective respondents.

In contacting each prospective respondent, the interviewer briefly explained the most general aims of the study. Then several questions concerning the consumption of alcoholic beverages were asked. The basic question asked, was "Do you ever have the occasion to use alcoholic beverages such as wine, beer or liquor?" If an affirmative answer was received, the prospective respondent was asked if he or she would be interested in participating in a study of this nature. At the same time anonymity was assured to prospective respondents.

The time and place for interviews were arranged to suit the convenience of the respondents. This often necessitated more than one interview session. Interviews usually took place in the respondents' home but occasionally at his place of work. The minimum time for an interview was twenty minutes, the maximum, one hour. Ordinarily, interviews lasted between twenty-five and forty minutes.

The interview combined questionnaire and schedule techniques and involved the use of structured questions. The content of these questions in questionnaire form is included in the appendixes. One may note, however, that the interview-questionnaire is divided into three general sections. The first section consists of questions on the social characteristics, which were read by the interviewer who in turn recorded the responses. The second section consisted for the most part of questions on drinking behavior and frequencies. The third section consisted of questions on a variety of topics concerning the attitudes toward the use

of alcoholic beverages.

Theoretical Orientation.--The present research uses as its foundation the descriptive approach which has been widely employed in sociology to describe the characteristics and behavior of groups such as juvenile delinquents, homeless men, alcoholics, and users of alcoholic beverages. In this approach a selection of categories is employed by which the group can be described in terms of age, sex, marital status, educational attainment, occupation, income, religion, and other relevant characteristics. Comparisons may, then, be made among the various categories.

Utilizing this approach, the writer hopes to describe the alcoholic beverage consumption behavior among Atlanta Negroes. In doing so, it will be necessary to define some of the concepts which will be used throughout the study.

Definition of Concepts.--The phrase "user of alcoholic beverages" refers to a respondent who at some previous time has consumed beverage alcohol and considers himself a user. "Non-user of alcoholic beverages" refers to one who has not used beverage alcohol and does not consider himself a user of such. "Regular drinkers" are defined as those who drink at least three times a week. "Occasional drinkers" are defined as those who drink fewer than three times a week.

To describe the different levels of effect obtained from the use of alcohol, the terms high, tight, and drunk were borrowed from the College Drinking Survey.¹ They were defined as follows: "High" indicates a

¹Robert Straus and Selden Bacon, Drinking In College (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953), p. 131.

noticeable effect alcohol has on a person without causing him to go beyond socially acceptable behavior. "Tight" refers to the unsteadiness in ordinary physical activities such as walking with balance, verbal accuracy, etc. "Drunk" suggest an overstepping of social expectancies (short of complete passing out), loss of control in ordinary physical activities, and inability to respond to reactions of others.

Limitations of the Design.--The researcher is always able to see areas of his investigation which, given more favorable conditions such as time, financial support, and more precise tools for the analysis of behavior, could have been dealt with more completely.¹ It is assumed that the above is an inherent limitation which is applicable to most studies in the field of human behavior. It must be noted, however, that the present investigation suffer from certain limitations of design as well.

It is of course not possible to measure the exact degree of accuracy of information provided by the respondents. There is always the possibility that the choice of words or the order of questions or their arrangement on the page will in some way bias the responses.² For some questions, such as family income and drinking practices, variation must be assumed in the respondents knowledge or perception. Other items which deal with personal feelings or opinions must be interpreted as the subjective type of information which they are. Even questions about measurable facts, such as frequency of drinking, amount usually consumed,

¹David Pittman and C. Wayne Gordon, Revolving Door (Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1958), p. 14.

²Straus and Bacon, op. cit., p. 5.

or number of times intoxicated, depend on memory and other factors of perception which can vary tremendously from individual to individual.

While it must be remembered that this study is necessarily subjected to certain limitations, an attempt has been made to minimize bias or confusion. The high degree of consistency of responses found in the majority of the questionnaires, with very few exceptions, indicates that the respondents were trying to provide accurate information.

Related Literature.--During the past four or five decades a sizable body of data has been accumulated concerning the drinking patterns among various groups in Western Civilization. Much of this has exhibited striking differences among these groups. Data collected by anthropologists during a similar period point likewise to a wide range of variations in drinking practices among "primitive" people.

Among the most notable and influential of these studies are Donald Horton,¹ "The Function of Alcohol in Primitive Societies." In this study Horton outlined some of the functions of alcoholic beverages in primitive societies. Among those functions were the use of alcohol for the relief of fear, as a sedative, for the release of aggression and in many other problematic situations.

Horton, also, pointed out that there is a high correlation between rapid acculturation and inebriety among primitive people.

In his study, "Culture Differences in Rates of Alcoholism," Robert Bales² pointed out three general ways in which culture and social

¹Donald Horton, "The Function of Alcohol in Primitive Societies," Quarterly Journal of Studies on Alcohol (September, 1945), 170-171.

²Robert Bales, "Culture Difference in Rates of Alcoholism," Quarterly Journal of Studies on Alcohol, VI (1946), 482-98.

organization can influence rates of alcoholism. The first is the degree to which the culture operates to bring about acute needs for adjustment, or inner tension, in its members. The second way is a sort of attitude toward drinking which the culture provides suitable substitute means of satisfaction. Ruth Bunzel¹ in her "Ethnography of Alcoholism," discusses the role of alcoholism in two Central American Cultures. By analyzing the attitudes surrounding drinking and the character of the emotions that are released under the influence of alcohol, Bunzel finds that the differences in behavior are symptomatic of very real and deeply rooted differences in the role which alcohol plays in the total economy of each of these cultures.

Several other studies have been made concerning the consumption patterns of alcoholic beverages among various American groups. Among these is "Drinking in College" by Robert Straus and Selden Bacon.² This is a survey of drinking customs and attitudes of a group of college students in the United States.

The general findings of this study was that the drinking of alcoholic beverages of college students is related to the general culture and not to the sub-culture of college life. It was also found that the incidence of drinking increased with each college year a trend which presumably reflects the progression of the student from adolescent to adult status and privileges.

¹Ruth Bunzel, "The Role of Alcoholism In Two Central American Cultures," Psychiatry, III (1940), 361-87.

²Robert Straus and Selden Bacon, Drinking in College (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953).

Another study was done by John Riley and Charles Marden, "The Social Pattern of Alcohol Drinking."¹ In this study, the researchers focused their attention upon drinking in the United States. The survey was based on a scientifically prepared sample of the adult population of the United States. It provided a new overall estimate of the incidence of drinking in 1946, and delineated the social patterns of drinking in the United States. In short, it offered substantial answers to the questions: (a) How many people drink? (b) What are their social characteristics? (c) Where do they live? and (d) What do they drink?

A study, "Drinking Behavior in the State of Washington" was done by Milton Maxwell.² This study was based on the previous findings of the National Opinion Research Center study in 1946, and the Washington Public Opinion Laboratory of the State College of Washington.

The purpose of the study was to report on the more obvious findings in the above cited polls which related to the state of Washington. Maxwell, also, presented findings concerning the actual drinking of the adults of the state along with the reasons they cited for drinking or abstaining, and their knowledge about alcohol, alcoholics, and rehabilitation.

A more recent study in which drinking patterns within a group is the main focus is "Alcohol and the Jews," by Charles R. Snyder.³ In

¹John Riley and Charles Marden, "The Social Pattern of Alcoholic Drinking," Quarterly Journal of Studies on Alcohol, VIII (1947), 265-73.

²Milton Maxwell, "Drinking Behavior in The State of Washington," Quarterly Journal of Studies on Alcohol, XIII (1953), 219-39.

³Charles Snyder, Alcohol and The Jews (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1958).

this study, Snyder was primarily concerned with the drinking patterns of the Jews and how they differ from other groups.

Following Robert Bales, mentioned above and rejecting other theories after examining the evidence for and against them, Snyder builds a well-supported case to show that Jews traditionally drink for religious and communicative reasons and not for secular or hedonistic reasons. Drinking which is early associated in the Jewish child's mind with religious symbolism can never be later used for escapism or mere good fellowship. He points out that, "for the Jew to become intoxicated symbolized the futility of the Jewish moral struggle in a society which holds Jewishness in disesteem."¹ Thus, while Jews drink frequently, the drinking nearly always is surrounded by an aura of religious symbolism. They do not drink merely to get drunk.

A book dealing more directly with the use of alcohol among Negroes was written by John Larkins.² In this book Larkins was concerned with the impact of alcohol and the Negro upon religion, the economy, politics, and social control. In discussing these issues, he traced their development and their impact upon specific institutions from the early history of the country until the 1960's. Information concerning the patterns of use of alcohol among Negroes in general were also included in this book.

Supplementary notes, historical data, and conclusions from Larkins work and other authors are included in the Appendixes.

As a point of departure from the above works, the present study

¹Ibid., p. 181.

²John Larkins, Alcohol and The Negro: Explosive Issues (Zebulon, N. C.: Record Publishing Co., 1965).

will concentrate on the patterns of alcohol consumption found among Negroes in the Atlanta urban area. It is hoped that it will provide additional knowledge about the pattern of drinking among various groups. It may also serve as a guide and a reference for other students interested in a similar study.

CHAPTER II

DRINKING BEHAVIOR AMONG ATLANTA NEGROES

The study of drinking patterns among Atlanta Negroes is best begun by describing the socio-cultural background of the subjects upon which the study is based. Several reasons dictate this review before reporting the results of the field research.

The first has to do with the sexual composition of the sample. Of the 172 persons interviewed, 119 or 68 per cent were men. The remaining fifty-three or 32 per cent were women. The large proportion of men resulted from the technique of interviewing the head of the households. Men were also found to be more willing to talk about their drinking than women. Therefore, the male respondents outnumbered females slightly more than two to one. A second reason for reviewing the socio-cultural data relates to the length of residence of the respondent in the Atlanta area. Only 34 per cent of the respondents reported having lived in Atlanta five years or less; while 63 per cent reported having lived in the city six years or more. This is an indication that the sample is representative of the city dweller. By the same measure, 84 per cent considered Atlanta their permanent home while only 14 per cent did not or were undecided.

In addition to summarizing data on the sexual composition of the sample Table 1 reports other socio-cultural data that might be useful in evaluating and interpreting inferences from the following study.

The use of alcoholic beverages is a pervasive feature of American society. Today, millions of people in the United States, both young and old, drink alcoholic beverages for widely different reasons and in

TABLE 1

DISTRIBUTION OF THE SAMPLE BY SELECTED
SOCIAL SEGMENTS

Social Segments	Number	Per cent
Sex		
Men	119	69.2
Women	53	30.8
Education		
Elementary (1-8 grades)	17	9.8
High School (9-12 grades)	68	39.5
College (1-5 years)	87	50.5
Age, years		
20-29	46	26.7
30-39	66	38.3
40-49	43	25.0
50-59	13	7.5
60-up	4	2.3
Marital Status		
Single	38	22.0
Married	100	58.1
Divorced	25	14.5
Separated	9	5.2
Religion		
Baptist	72	42.6
Methodist	48	28.4
Presbyterian	15	8.8
Episcopalian	16	9.4
Catholic	15	8.8
Other	3	1.7

varying amounts.¹ In a recent study by Dr. Harold Mulford of the

¹Gerald Globett, A Survey of Teenage Drinking in Two Mississippi Communities, Preliminary Report No. 3 prepared by The Social Science Research Center (State College, Mississippi: October, 1964), p. 1.

University of Iowa, results show that 71 per cent of the nation's adults drink at one time or another.¹

The prevalence of drinking alcoholic beverages among Atlanta Negroes was found to be consistent with the results of the National Survey. To measure prevalence of drinking among the respondents in this study, the following question was asked: "Do you ever have occasion to use alcoholic beverages such as liquor, wine, or beer, or are you an abstainer?" This wording was borrowed from the Gallup poll, which has used the question repeatedly. Tabulations show that of the 292 respondents queried, 212 or 72 per cent gave an affirmative answer (Table 2). This is only one per cent more than the percentage found in the National Survey. The other eighty or 38 per cent reported that they were abstainers.

Information on the use of alcoholic beverages is incomplete without some knowledge of the manner in which the drinker first comes into contact with the beverages. Among such questions are the age of introduction to drinking, who supplied the first drink, whether after taking the first drink consumption is periodic or regular, who is present on the occasion, who sanctions the activity, and the purposes of drinking as revealed by the reasons given for taking the first drink. Thus by studying the situation the person's introduction to alcoholic beverages takes place much may be learned about the cultural setting in which this activity occurs and about the values associated with it.

In this study most of the respondents reported receiving their first drink of an alcoholic beverage from a member of the family. Among the

¹Harold A. Mulford, "Drinking and Deviant Drinking, U.S.A., 1963," Quarterly Journal of Studies on Alcohol, XXV (December, 1964), 648.

TABLE 2

NUMBER, PERCENTAGE, AND SEX OF RESPONDENTS

Respondents	Total		Sex	
	Number	Per cent	Male	Female
Users of Alcoholic Beverages	212	72	131	81
Non-users	80	38	30	50

111 respondents who remembered who gave them their first drink, sixty-six or 59 per cent recalled receiving it from a member of the nuclear family (father, mother, brother, sister). The remaining forty-five or 41 per cent recalled taking their first drink from others, including friends. Twenty-five per cent held the father responsible for their first drink; while 21.6 per cent recalled getting their first drink from a brother in the family. According to this, the male members of the family are held responsible for giving almost half of the respondents their first drink. The female members are held responsible for giving only 12.6 per cent of the respondents their first drink. Those who recalled getting their first drink from "others" reported 34.2 per cent from friends and 6.3 per cent from unidentified or other persons. Only fifty-three or 31 per cent of the respondents could not remember who gave them their first taste of an alcoholic beverage. The respondents who recalled who gave them their first drink reported their age as follows: three were less than nine years old at the time, 103 were between the ages of ten and nineteen, and only four recalled being over twenty at the time of their first drink.

Most of the respondents recalled that they started drinking on their

own shortly after they had their first drink. Of the 168 who answered the question concerning the age at which they started drinking on their own, almost half, 49.4 per cent, reported beginning between the ages of ten and nineteen years of age. Forty per cent recalled that they began drinking between the ages of twenty and twenty-nine. None of the respondents recalled beginning drinking beyond that age. There were eighteen or 10.3 per cent who did not remember at what age they began drinking.

These data on early drinking experiences may or may not be taken literally, for there are many selective processes which may obscure memories and especially those of childhood. Actually, in many cases, there were reasons for believing that many of the respondents had their first taste of an alcoholic drink earlier than their remembrances suggest.

When the respondents were asked if their drinking habits had changed since they began drinking, 62 per cent of the total sample said "no," 37.7 per cent of the sample said "yes." Slightly more than half of those who said that their drinking habits changed reported drinking more. In fact, 54.6 per cent reported that they now drink more than when they began. Fourteen per cent reported drinking less; 7.8 per cent reported drinking more often; while 23.3 per cent gave other changes in their habit of alcoholic beverages consumption.

According to the above data most of the respondents have not changed their drinking habits since their initiation. They insist that their drinking is still done for social reasons. That is, a drink maybe taken in those situations in which friends or other companions were present. In most cases, a similar situation prevailed at the time of the first

drink.

Determining frequencies of drinking over a time span such as a year, which encompasses seasonal and other special variations, is very difficult. Few people keep track of exactly how often they drink. The persons questioned in this study were no exceptions. Those who seldom drank had little trouble recalling their few drinking experiences, but those who drank more frequently did not recall their experiences with much precision. In view of this situation a list which allowed each respondent to choose among several alternative frequencies was constructed. This enabled the researcher to obtain a more exact estimation of the frequency of drinking various alcoholic beverages. Even so, the frequencies obtained can only be regarded as approximations. For purposes of comparisons, the frequencies have been classified in accordance with the broad intervals used in the College Drinking Survey.¹ This data is presented in Table 3.

Table 3 indicates that about one-fifth of the respondents use alcoholic beverages more than once a week. More than 45 per cent reported using alcoholic beverages two to three times per month. Only 2.4 per cent of the sample recalled using alcoholic beverages each day of the week while 6.6 per cent reported using it less than once a year. Therefore, the above data indicates that there are few who drink daily while most of the others drink occasionally.

The most common alcoholic beverages can be classified in three groups: beer, wine, and distilled spirits. Aside from differences in

¹R. Straus and S. Bacon, Drinking in College (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953), p. 101.

TABLE 3

FREQUENCY OF DRINKING AMONG ATLANTA NEGROES

Frequency	Number	Per cent
Four or more days per week	7	2.4
Two-three days per week	31	18.6
Two-three times per month	72	43.3
Six-twelve times per year	39	23.4
Once per year	9	5.4
Less than once a year	11	6.6

the manufacturing processes, these three types of beverages also are characterized by wide variation in alcoholic content. Beer usually contains from 3 to 6 per cent alcohol by volume. The alcoholic content of wines may range from about 8 per cent for some homemade varieties to 12 per cent for some brand of table wines and from 18 to 21 per cent for the aperitifs (sherry, vermouth). Distilled spirits contain from around 30 to 50 per cent alcohol by volume. Such spirits are commonly classified by their "proof" value, which is approximately twice their alcoholic content. Thus, a "100 proof" liquor is 50 per cent absolute alcohol.

The prices paid for these different types of alcoholic beverages bear some direct relationship to their alcoholic content. For example, a quart of beer costs less than a quart of wine of comparable quality, but a quart of spirits is considerably more expensive than the wine. According to this standard beer is the cheapest, and spirits the most expensive, of alcoholic beverages.

Beer, wine, and spirits are also differentiated by their very distinctive tastes. Because of this, it is not unusual for an individual to acquire a liking for the taste of one form of alcoholic beverage and to find other forms quite distasteful.

There are many factors, then, which may influence an individual's preference for or use of a particular type of beverage. These include cost, alcoholic content, and taste.

Now in this study the respondents were asked to indicate their preference among beer, wine, and whiskey. More than half, 58.7 per cent, of the respondents gave beer as their first choice and as the beverage they most frequently used (Table 4). In this table whiskey was broken down into the various types of distilled spirits.¹ A cumulative percentage shows that 36.5 per cent of the respondents preferred whiskey while only 4.0 per cent preferred wine (Table 4).

Beer is probably the most frequently used beverage because of its cost and alcoholic content. It is relatively inexpensive and can be obtained in large quantities. Its alcoholic content is about 3 to 6 per cent by volume. It is possible to consume it in large quantities. There are many who are able to consume very large quantities without becoming intoxicated.

The respondents were asked, "what types of distilled spirits they used most:" 32.7 per cent reported using bourbon, 22.6 per cent reported using scotch, 19.8 per cent preferred vodka, and 15 per cent liked gin. Rum and brandy were also reported as preferences by 6.3

¹Here whiskey refers to distilled spirits such as bourbon, scotch, gin, vodka, brandy, and rum.

TABLE 4

KINDS OF BEVERAGES PREFERRED BY MOST RESPONDENTS

Kinds of Beverages	Number	Per cent
Beer	101	58.7
Bourbon	26	15.1
Scotch	18	10.4
Vodka	9	5.3
Wine	8	4.0
Gin	6	3.4
Rum	4	2.3
Total	172	99.2

per cent and 3.7 per cent of the sample, respectively (Table 5).

As indicated in Table 5, most of the respondents preferred or at least drank bourbon whiskey. Many reported drinking it, presumably because of its cost. The respondents presumably were concerned with comparative costs but did not make explicit the standard of comparison. Bourbon is cheaper than scotch but not cheaper than most gins and vodkas. There were also others who drank it because they like its taste. Scotch whiskey rated second among the distilled spirits. It is considered a prestigious drink by many of its consumers. Since it is imported from Scotland, it is much more expensive than the average bourbon whiskey. In addition, many of the scotch drinkers reported drinking scotch because of its lightness, mildness, or simply its taste.

The estimation of the average amount of alcohol consumed by the

TABLE 5

DISTILLED SPIRITS MOST FREQUENTLY USED BY
THE RESPONDENTS

Kind of Beverage	Number	Per cent
Bourbon	52	32.7
Scotch	36	22.6
Vodka	31	19.8
Gin	24	15.0
Rum	10	6.2
Brandy	6	3.7
Total	159	100.0

respondents in a drinking situation presents problems similar to those encountered in determining frequencies of drinking. A measure of quantity, in order to be meaningful, depends both on what is drunk and on the approximate alcoholic content. For example, six ounces of beer contain but a tenth as much absolute alcohol as six ounces of straight whiskey. Furthermore, it was noticed that most of the respondents were seldom conscious of how much they drank in terms of any standard measure. They could usually estimate that they drank an average of two cans of beer or a half pint of wine or whiskey each time. They made no mention of the jigger, a standard of measurement commonly used in recipes.

In order to approximate the amounts consumed, some standardizing had to be done and adjustments made for differences in the alcoholic content of various types of beverages. In an attempt to do this, the

respondents were asked to indicate, for each type of beverage (beer, wine, or whiskey), the average amount ordinarily consumed at one sitting. The information thus provided was then coded into three groups labeled as small, medium and large amounts. Coding criteria were designed so that the various classifications would contain approximately the same amount of absolute alcohol, regardless of beverage type. To this end, Straus and Bacon have proposed the following rules of convenience, which are also adopted here:

Smaller amounts would contain less than 1.4 ounces of absolute alcohol; Medium amounts between 1.4 and 3 ounces; and larger amounts 3 ounces or more. Translating the terms used by the respondents, smaller amounts included up to 3 glasses or 2 bottles of beer, up to 2 glasses of wine, or 2 drinks containing spirits; large amounts included more than 8 glasses or 6 bottles of beer, 6 glasses of wine or 4 drinks containing spirits. For purposes of approximation, it was assumed that the average wine glass contained 3.5 ounces the average beer glass 8 ounces, and the average jigger, "shot," or drink containing spirits 1.5 ounces.¹

The average quantity of alcoholic beverages consumed at a sitting showed rather wide variation depending on the type of beverage (Table 6). Most of the respondents consumed more alcohol at a sitting when drinking spirits than when drinking beer or wine. More than 98 per cent of the respondents consumed only smaller or medium amounts of wine, and more than 88 per cent consumed smaller or medium amounts of beer. Slightly more than one out of five respondents reported that they usually drink large amounts of spirits.

A further analysis of the distribution shows that of 164 beer drinkers, sixty-eight or 41.4 per cent drink a small amount at an average sitting, seventy-seven or 46.9 per cent drink a medium amount; and only

¹Straus and Bacon, op. cit., p. 102.

TABLE 6

AVERAGE AMOUNTS OF BEER, WINE AND SPIRITS
CONSUMED AT A SITTING

Amount of Each Beverage	Number	Per cent
Beer	164	95.3
Smaller	68	41.4
Medium	77	46.9
Large	19	11.5
Wine	61	35.4
Smaller	48	78.6
Medium	12	19.6
Large	1	1.6
Whiskey	163	94.7
Smaller	56	37.3
Medium	70	42.9
Large	37	22.6

nineteen or 11.5 per cent reported drinking a large amount. A total of sixty-one persons reported drinking wine. More than 78 per cent recalled drinking a smaller amount; 19.6 per cent reported drinking a medium amount; and only 1.6 per cent stated that they drank a large amount of wine. The whiskey drinkers show a greater degree of distribution. From a sample of 163 respondents, fifty-six or 37.3 per cent reported drinking a smaller amount; seventy or 42.9 per cent said they drank a medium amount; and thirty-seven or 22.6 per cent reported drinking a large

amount.

In seeking to describe patterns of drinking behavior by Atlanta Negroes, one must look for frequently recurring combinations of many factors. Other basic factors in the drinking customs besides quantity and frequency are the time, the place, and the presence companions. Usually these factors are closely related. Drinking in the home is apt to be with family members. Drinking in night clubs or taverns are usually during the evening hours and with mixed groups or with one person of the opposite sex.

When the respondents in this study were asked to recall the times when most of their drinking is done, almost three-fourths, 73.2 per cent reported drinking on the weekend, while 5.8 per cent reported drinking on holidays. No specific holidays were mentioned. Another 21.7 per cent stated that they had no regular time to drink.

Respondents were also asked to recall the place where most of their drinking takes place. From all indications, most drinking is done at home. In fact, 84.6 per cent reported doing most of their drinking in private homes, either their own or those of friends, only 15.1 per cent reported doing most of their drinking at night clubs, bars, and other places.

Drinking is primarily a social custom, and most people usually drink in company. While drinking alone is not uncommon, most of the respondents in this study reported drinking with others. Sixty-nine and nine tenth per cent reported drinking with their spouses; while 32 per cent reported drinking with friends.

Of all the information sought in this study, the reasons for drinking were held in advance to be the most difficult to obtain and the most

likely to be unreliable. Yet there seemed to be no hesitancy on the part of the respondents when asked to indicate their main reasons for drinking. The reasons they gave for drinking are presented in terms of main classifications in Table 7. The replies pointed to a major division into reasons which are called "social," in which the respondents attribute their drinking mainly to the stimulus of the social situations in which drinking takes place; and to reasons called "individual," in which the respondents attribute the main reason to be the pleasurable effects or consequences of their drinking. In toto, the individual reasons slightly outnumber the social ones.

Much more frequently than for any other single reason, people say they drink "to be sociable." While some few respondents reserve drinking for special occasions such as holidays and special parties, the bulk of their responses were stated in general terms - "just to be sociable," or "just a habit or custom."

Within this general grouping, however, were included persons who drank because they felt that failure to do otherwise in a social situation threatened mild ostracism. Still others were apparently following the dictates of fashion. While these distinctions are not clear-cut enough to be handled statistically, they suggest possible clues for approaches to the larger question. The following are some of the answers of those who seem most influenced by the fear of group pressures:

"All of my friends drink, so when I'm with them I also drink"

"Most of the clubs I go to liquor is there, and you are not with it if you don't drink."

"I don't like to feel or be different when everyone else is drinking."

TABLE 7

REPORTED REASONS FOR DRINKING

Reasons	Number	Per cent
Social Reasons	65	38.2
Sociability	41	63.0
To keep spouse happy	6	9.2
On Special Occasions	4	6.1
Just a habit	14	21.5
Individual Reasons	98	57.6
To get a good feeling	26	26.5
Like the taste	29	29.5
To relax	37	37.7
Loneliness	3	3.0
To get drunk	3	3.0

"Sometimes when we have company I drink to be sociable."

"Its just the thing to do when you are at some social functions - such as cocktail parties, etc."

The above answers to the reason for drinking indicate that the social situation plays a significant role in encouraging social drinking. As shown in Table 7, 63 per cent of the respondents who reported drinking for social reasons gave "to be sociable" as the main reason; 21.5 per cent reported drank because it's "just a habit." Another 9.2 per cent reported drinking "to keep spouse happy," while 6.1 per cent reported drinking only "on special occasions."

More than half of the drinkers reported that they also drink for other than social reasons, such as "to get a good feeling," "to relax," "because of loneliness," and "to get drunk." Some simply say they like the taste. While most of the categories under this second major classification are self explanatory, the general heading "to relax," characteristic of more than one drinker out of every three, covers a variety of responses. Typical answers range from drinking for relaxation, or for evphoric effects, to drinking as an escape from worries, responsibilities, or frustration:

A carpenter: "It makes me feel relaxed - especially after a hard days work."

A teacher: "I take a drink to steady my nerves after a long day in school."

A postman: "I get out with the fellows ever so often to get away from everything."

A housewife: "I drink because my husband asks me to drink with him."

Thus it may be said again that most of the reasons given for drinking are social reasons, with group references. For example, people drink to overcome feelings of inadequacy in relation to others. Also, people drink from a feeling of loneliness, or to offset the feeling of being isolated from other people.

It may be concluded that drinking behavior is socially derived and socially induced. It is not only a sociocultural phenomenon but a complex one with many patterns.

CHAPTER III

DRINKING PATTERNS BY AGE AND SEX

Drinking in our society has been only partially studied in relation to the basic structural variables of age and sex. Such behavior is known to vary strikingly in incidence between the sexes and find its fullest expression in the middle and late years of life. Despite these pronounced differences in the extremes of drinking, sociologists have contributed little to the understanding of drinking patterns in terms of age and sex beyond a repetition of statistical data and allusions to differences in the "traditional roles" of men and women, and, old and young.

Exceptions must be taken to this characterization of the existing state of knowledge as it pertains to adolescents and young adults. Such is the case in a study by George Maddox, "Teenage Drinking in The United States."¹ In this work, Maddox reviews and interprets sociologically the principal findings of several studies dealing with the drinking patterns of teenagers in the United States. It is clear from his report that drinking patterns among these adolescents tend to follow parental practices and are to a high degree predictable from a knowledge of background variables of a socio-cultural nature. He also points out that stresses of adolescence, such as they may be, are not manifested on a wide scale in excessive drinking. Maddox's data led him to play down

¹George Maddox, "Teenage Drinking in The United States," Society Culture, and Drinking Patterns (New York: John Wiley & Son, Inc., 1962), pp. 230-245.

the probability that adolescents would be coerced by their peer groups into extremes of drinking, but he by no means denied the fact that peer groups play a great role in shaping drinking behavior.

Straus and Bacon,¹ were concerned with a slightly older group - the college group. As in the case of the teenagers, variations in college student's drinking patterns depend to a significant degree upon socio-cultural background factors.

In the present context it bears mention that a study by John Haer² presents evidence that drinking behavior in the population at large - including older as well as younger drinkers - tends to conform more closely to the patterns of one's contemporaries i.e., one's friends or spouse, than to the patterns of older generations. This is a pattern which may be considered highly probable in a highly mobile and rapidly changing society as ours.

The data obtained in this study will be analyzed in the light of the above studies. Some of the conclusions of those studies may be substantiated or refuted in reference to the respondents of this study.

Analyzing the sample in terms of age and sex, one finds that it consists of 119 men (63.3 per cent) and fifty-three women (30.8 per cent). The respondents range in age from twenty years of age to sixty-four years of age. None were found to be over sixty-five years of age. A more detailed analysis of this study in terms of age and sex is presented

¹R. Straus and S. Bacon, Drinking in College (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953).

²D. Pittman and C. Snyder, Society, Culture, and Drinking Patterns (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1962), p. 227.

TABLE 8

AGE AND SEX OF SAMPLE

Age	Sex			
	Male		Female	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
20 - 34	41	23.2	33	19.2
35 - 49	62	36.0	19	11.0
50 - 64	16	9.3	1	.5

in Table 8.

As previously indicated, information on alcohol usage is incomplete without knowledge of the manner in which the drinker first comes in contact with the substance.¹ With reference to the early drinking experiences of the respondents in this study, sixty-six or 59 per cent reported getting their first taste of an alcoholic beverage from a member of the immediate family, i.e., father, mother, sister or brother. Of these, forty-six or 41.4 per cent were males while only twenty or 18 per cent were females. On the other hand, forty-five or 41 per cent of the respondents reported receiving their first drink from "others," including friends. These included thirty-two males and thirteen females or 28.8 and 11.7 per cent respectively. (Table 9).

This analysis lends to the conclusion that drinking for a majority of the respondents began in the home and family. In the childhood stage, first drinking experiences for both males and females took place in their own homes or in the homes of friends. In drinking after the first

¹See Chapter II, p. 14.

TABLE 9

PERSONS FROM WHOM RESPONDENTS RECEIVED FIRST
DRINK, BY SEX

From Whom First Drink Received	Sex					
	Totals		Male		Female	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Family	66	59.0	46	41.4	20	18.0
Other	45	41.0	32	28.8	13	11.6

experience the usual companions of the respondents were close friends and family.

As stated earlier in this study, those who recalled which person gave them their first drink of an alcoholic beverage reported their ages as follows: three were less than nine years old at the time; 103 were between the ages of ten and nineteen; and only four recalled being over twenty years old at the time of their first drink.

A further analysis shows that of the three respondents who received their first drink before age nine, two were females and one male. Of course the number is far too few to make any reliable generalization. In the age category between ten and nineteen, 54.9 per cent of the respondents who stated this as the age group in which they received their first drink were males. The percentage of females found in this category was 23.6. Another 15.9 per cent, of which 13.7 per cent were females, did not remember at what age they received their first drink.

One may note that 49.4 per cent of the men and women who drink reported that they started drinking on their own between the ages of 10 and 19 years of age. The distribution of the others according to age at

TABLE 10

EARLY DRINKING EXPERIENCE, BY AGE AND SEX

Age	Sex					
	Totals		Male		Female	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
10 - 19	85	49.4	70	40.7	15	8.7
20 - 29	69	40.0	39	22.6	30	17.4
Don't Know	18	10.4	10	5.8	8	4.6

the onset of drinking appears in Table 10. A total of 40.7 per cent of the men and 8.7 per cent of the women who drink, began at or before the age of nineteen.

After coming in contact with alcohol in the early childhood years, for many drinking becomes periodic activity but for others it becomes a regular activity. As a means of determining the changes in the respondents drinking behavior, respondents were asked if their habits had changed since they began drinking. A total of 107 or more than 62 per cent of the respondents, gave a negative response to the question. The other 65 or 37.7 per cent of the respondents gave an affirmative response. Of those who stated that their habits had changed 35, (54.6 per cent), said that they now drink more. A mere 14 per cent reported drinking less now than they did when starting. A further analysis of the changes in the drinking habits of the respondents shows that 92 per cent of those who changed were males. Most of the males reported drinking more after changing. In fact, of the 54.4 per cent who stated that they drink more 50 per cent were males. Fourteen per cent of the respondents, as stated, reported that they drink less now than when beginning. Of

TABLE 11

CHANGES IN DRINKING HABITS AND SEX

Changes In Habits	Sex					
	Totals		Male		Female	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Drink more	35	54.6	32	50.0	3	4.6
Drink less	9	14.0	7	10.9	2	3.1
Drink more often	5	7.8	5	7.8		
Drink Better Whiskey	9	14.0	9	14.0		
Others	6	9.3	6	9.3		

this percentage, 10.9 per cent were males (Table 11).

The above data seem to point to the fact that most of the respondents who changed their drinking habits were males. This does not mean, of course, that there were no changes in the drinking habits of females, as the data appear to indicate. It may be pointed out here that males were generally more cooperative in talking about their past and present drinking habits. In fact, only slightly more than a third of the total sample gave information concerning the changes in their drinking patterns. This is a rather small percentage of the respondents on which to base any reliable generalization. Therefore, it would be wise to use the above generalization for statistical purposes only.

In this section the researcher is primarily concerned with the frequency of drinking with respect to age and sex. Such factors are known to have some bearing upon the quantity and frequency of drinking among most groups. These factors will be analyzed and interpreted in the

light of the present data on the quantity and frequency of drinking among Atlanta Negroes.

For a measure of frequency, respondents were asked how often they drank various alcoholic beverages. The distribution of replies does not suggest that frequent drinking among the respondents is widespread, as indicated in Table 12.

Analyzing the above table, one finds that slightly more than half of the men and about one-fourth of the women who drink do so no more than twice a month. A sixth of the men and a fifth of the women who drink do so six times or less a year. Only 2.4 per cent of the men and no women reported drinking more frequently than four or more times per week. It is evident that the males drink more frequently than females.

The task of correlating age, sex, and frequency of drinking in one table is a rather difficult one. Yet Table 13 has been designed to do just that. The concepts, "regular" and "occasional" have been substituted for the frequency categories used in Table 12. Regular drinkers are defined as those who drink at least three times a week. All other are designated occasional drinkers.

Consideration of the extent of drinking by the respondents according to their chronological age suggests that a peak in the frequency of drinking may be reached during the early years. Among drinkers between the ages of 20.39, 16.6 per cent of the men and 4.9 per cent of the women reported drinking regularly. In the same age category 25.3 per cent of the men and 16.0 per cent of the women reported drinking occasionally. In the 40-59 year old age group, it was found that 5.5 per cent of the males and 2.4 per cent of the females reported drinking

TABLE 12

FREQUENCY OF DRINKING BY SEX

Frequency	Sex					
	Totals		Male		Female	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
4 or more times per week	4	2.4	4	2.4		
2 or 3 times per week	31	18.6	22	13.2	9	5.4
2 times per month	72	43.3	62	37.3	10	6.0
6 to 12 times per year	39	23.4	21	12.6	18	10.8
Once a year	9	5.4	4	2.4	5	3.0
Less than once a year	11	6.6	2	1.2	9	5.4

regularly while 23.4 and 3.8 per cent, respectively, reported drinking occasionally. In the older age category, 60 and up, no one reported drinking regularly while 2.4 per cent of the men reported drinking occasionally.

Type and Amount of each Beverage by Sex.--As stated in an earlier chapter, the most common beverages containing alcohol may be classified into three groups: beer, wine, and distilled spirits, commonly called whiskey. Aside from the differences in manufacturing processes, these three types of beverages also are characterized by widely varying alcohol content.

An attempt to achieve some estimate of the average amount of alcohol consumed by the respondents on any occasion of drinking was very

TABLE 13
FREQUENCY OF DRINKING BY AGE AND SEX

Age	Sex							
	Male				Female			
	Regular Drinker		Occasional Drinker		Regular Drinker		Occasional Drinker	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
20 - 39	27	16.6	41	25.3	8	4.9	26	16.0
40 - 59	9	5.5	38	23.4	4	2.4	5	3.8
60 - up			4	2.4				

difficult. In order to approximate the amount consumed, some standardizing had to be done, and adjustments made for differences in the alcoholic content of various types of beverages. The respondents, as reported in Chapter 2, were merely asked to indicate, for each type of beverage (beer, wine, and spirits), the average amount ordinarily consumed at a sitting. The information thus provided was then coded into three groups labeled as smaller, medium, and larger amounts.

The average quantity of alcoholic beverage consumed at a sitting showed rather wide variations depending on the type of beverage and the sex of the drinker (Table 14).

According to the distribution in Table 7, both men and women consumed more alcohol at a sitting when drinking whiskey than when drinking wine. When drinking beer, more females drink more at a sitting than when drinking whiskey. More than 98 per cent of the respondents of both sexes consumed only a smaller or medium amount of wine, and more than 88 per cent consumed smaller or medium amounts of beer. A fifth of the men and 2.4 per cent of the women reported that they usually drink larger amounts of whiskey.

It may be pointed out that in measuring the extent of drinking, neither quantity nor frequency alone provide an adequate index. Even the individual who drink daily would probably not be considered a heavy drinker if he consumed only a glass of beer or wine or whiskey. Nor would a person be considered a heavy drinker who takes, say five or six drinks at a sitting if his drinking is confined to three or four specific holidays or events a year. It was deemed desirable to find a measure of drinking which would account for frequency and quantity at the

TABLE 14

TYPE AND AMOUNT OF EACH BEVERAGE BY SEX

Amount of each Beverage	Sex					
	Totals		Male		Female	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Beer						
Smaller Amount	68	41.4	39	23.7	29	17.6
Medium amount	77	46.9	62	37.8	15	9.1
Larger Amount	19	11.5	12	7.3	7	4.2
Wine						
Smaller Amount	48	78.6	32	52.4	16	26.2
Medium Amount	12	19.6	12	19.6		
Larger Amount	1	1.6	1	1.6		
Whiskey						
Smaller Amount	56	37.3	29	17.7	27	16.5
Medium Amount	70	42.9	54	33.1	16	9.8
Larger Amount	37	22.6	33	20.2	4	2.4

same time.

Following the established statistical technique, the indices of quantity and frequency of drinking by men and women were determined. Quantity value for each of the indices were taken as the usual amounts consumed of the types of beverages most frequently used. Table 15, is designed to provide the necessary quantity - frequency indices. An examination of these according to several criteria of behavior result in

TABLE 15

TYPE, AMOUNT, AND FREQUENCY OF EACH BEVERAGE

Amount of Beverages	Totals		Regular Drinkers		Occasional Drinkers	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Beer						
Smaller Amount	87	51.7	25	14.9	62	36.9
Medium Amount	55	32.7	4	2.3	51	30.3
Large Amount	26	15.4	20	11.9	6	3.5
Wine						
Smaller Amount	77	85.5	46	51.1	31	34.4
Medium Amount	12	13.3	2	2.2	10	11.1
Large Amount	1	1.1	1	1.1		
Whiskey						
Smaller Amount	66	39.0	16	9.4	50	29.5
Medium Amount	64	37.8	11	6.5	53	31.3
Large Amount	39	23.0	22	13.0	17	10.5

the classification of each of the types of beverages and their amount into regular or occasional drinking.

It should be stressed that the above quantity - frequency indices are merely conceptual tools which have been used as convenient measures in considering the relationship between the extent of drinking and various other aspects of behavior.

When and Where Most Drinking Takes Place.--In seeking to describe the pattern of drinking behavior among the respondents of this study,

the researcher examined many frequently recurring combinations of factors. Some of those basic recurring factors were the time, the place, and the companions with whom such behavior took place. Usually such factors are closely related. Drinking in the home is apt to be with family members or friends. Drinking in night clubs is, more or less, restrained to evening hours and usually with mixed groups or with another of the opposite sex.

In considering the time factor in drinking, it was found that more persons, 73.3 per cent, drank on the weekend than at any other time. Only 5.8 per cent reported doing most of their drinking on holidays. Another 21.7 per cent of the sample listed "other" time for doing most of their drinking. A significantly greater proportion of men, 50.5 per cent, usually do most of their drinking on weekends than is true of the women, 21.7 per cent. More men, 4.1 per cent, reported drinking on holidays than women, 1.7 per cent. Also, only 6.4 per cent of the women and 15.2 per cent of the men reported other times for most of their drinking.

The usual places for drinking for men and women are shown in Table 16. From it, one can clearly see that most drinking is done in the home. In fact, about five out of every six persons reported doing most of their drinking in private homes, either in their own or those of friends. A further analysis shows that more men, 55.5 per cent, reported doing their drinking in private homes than women, 21.9 per cent. In considering drinking in other establishments, it was found that 9.9 per cent of the men reported drinking in taverns while no women reported doing so. On the other hand 1.1 per cent of the women reported drinking in night clubs while no men reported doing so.

It must be pointed out that some of the percentages in Table 16, are much too small to make any reliable generalizations. Therefore, they must be quoted with the greatest of caution. For example, while it is rather commonly accepted that more men than women drink in taverns, it may not be said that more women than men drink in night clubs. Night club drinking is commonly regarded as taking place in mixed company, and this is substantiated by the data. It is however, true that some women do go there unaccompanied.

Reason for Drinking By Age and Sex.--Information concerning the reasons for drinking usually difficult to ascertain. In fact, in this study reasons for drinking were held in advance to be the most difficult to obtain and the most likely to be unreliable. Yet, when the respondents were asked their reasons for drinking there seemed to be little or no hesitancy on their part in responding to the questions.

An analysis of the reasons for drinking by both sexes are presented in Table 17. The replies referred to previously seemed to point to two major divisions - social and individual. We recall that those occasions in which the respondents attributed their drinking mainly to the stimulus of the social situation in which drinking takes place were called social, and those occasions in which the respondents attributed the main reasons to the pleasurable effects or consequences of their drinking were called individual. In the total replies, the individuals reasons slightly out numbered the social ones.

Much more than any other single reason men and women stated that they drank "to be sociable." Observing from Table 10, one finds that 35.3 per cent of the men and 27.7 per cent of the females reported

TABLE 16

WHERE MOST DRINKING TAKES PLACE BY SEX

Place of Drinking	Sex					
	Totals		Male		Female	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Home	94	54.9	59	34.5	35	20.4
Friend's Home	51	29.7	36	21.0	15	8.7
Tavern	17	9.9	17	9.9		
Night Club	2	1.1			2	1.1
Other	7	4.1	6	3.5	1	.5

drinking "to be sociable." While some few respondents reserved drinking for special occasions such as holidays and special parties, the bulk of social reasons for drinking were stated in general terms as "just to be sociable" or "just a habit" or "custom."

Within the general category of "social reasons," were included some persons who drank because otherwise the social situation threaten mild ostracism and others who were apparently merely following the dictates of fashion. For example, 9.2 per cent of the social drinkers reported drinking "to keep spouse happy." As expected the majority were women, in fact all were of the feminine gender. Of those who reported drinking for or "on special occasions" 4.6 per cent were men and 1.5 per cent female. The greatest discrepancy between the sexes was the item concerning drinking as "just a habit," which was noted as of importance by 21.5 per cent of the men and none of the women. This is not to say, of course, that men are more habitual when it comes to drinking than are women.

TABLE 17

REASONS FOR DRINKING BY SEX

Reasons	Sex					
	Totals		Male		Female	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Social Reasons	65	38.2	40	61.5	25	38.4
Sociability	41	63.0	23	35.3	18	27.7
Just a Habit	14	21.5	14	21.5		
To keep Spouse Happy	6	9.2			6	9.2
On Special Occasions	4	6.1	3	4.6	1	1.5
Individual Reasons	98	57.6	71	72.4	27	27.5
To Relax	37	37.7	29	29.5	8	8.1
Just like its taste	29	29.5	20	20.4	9	9.1
To get a Good feeling	26	26.5	17	17.3	9	9.1
Loneliness	3	3.0	2	2.0	1	1.0
To get drunk	3	3.0	3	3.0		

More men than women simply reported their reason for drinking as "just a habit."

Slightly more than half of the male and female drinkers reported that they drink for other than social reasons, such as "to get a good feeling," "to relax," "because of loneliness," and "to get drunk." Some simply stated that they "just like the taste of alcohol."

While most of the categories under the second major classification are self-explanatory, the general heading "to relax" may cover a variety of responses. Typical responses range from drinking for relaxation or euphoric effects to drinking as an escape from worries, responsibilities or frustration. For example, 29.5 per cent of the male and 8.1 per cent of the females reported drinking to relax.

Of the other reported reasons for drinking as listed under individual reasons, drinking because of a "like for the taste" received the greatest percentage of males and female. To be exact 20.4 per cent were males and 9.1 per cent were females making a cumulative percentage of 29.5 per cent. Also under individual reasons, 17.3 per cent of the male and 9.1 per cent of the females reported drinking "to get a good feeling." Only two per cent of the males and one per cent of the females reported drinking because of loneliness. Likewise, only 3 per cent of the males and none of the females reported drinking "to get drunk."

The above reasons given for drinking indicate that the social situation plays a significant role in encouraging social drinking. Most of the reasons given for drinking are social reasons with group references. It is in this connection that many females associated the item "to keep spouse happy." That is, they drink because they feel it is expected of them in mixed company and among certain social groups. Then, there are those who feel that drinking is necessary in order to "socialize;" and some fear that if they don't drink they will not be invited to various social functions at which alcoholic beverages are served.

The greatest discrepancy between the sexes was in the terms associated with the effect received from alcohol, such as "to get high,"

which was noted as of importance by 19.7 per cent of the men and only 2.6 per cent of the women, and "just to feel good," which was important for 32.8 per cent of the men and for only 5.2 per cent of the women. None of the women, as compared with 5.2 per cent of the men expected "to get drunk" after drinking. Only 3.9 per cent of the women as compared to 17.1 per cent of the men noted drinking as an "aid to relax."

In this chapter the researcher has attempted to analyze the drinking behavior of the respondents of this study in terms of age and sex. To the best of the writer's ability, this task has been accomplished.

CHAPTER IV

DRINKING BEHAVIOR AND OTHER SOCIAL-CULTURAL FACTORS

The findings of this study clearly confirm the fact that the drinking of alcoholic beverages is customary, varying from culture to culture and among the various subgroups within any one society.

In customary behavior a fairly wide range of variability is available to the individual. Some customs are loosely structured, poorly integrated with other aspects of the culture, ineffectively transmitted to the next generation, and so otherwise lacking in strength that individual variation is fairly extensive.¹ In such cases an individual may determine his own behavior to a limited extent, but even here he is heavily influenced by his culture and social surroundings.

The findings of this study emphasize the fact that variation in behavior relating to drinking is closely correlated with such basic social factors as the family, personal association, religious affiliation, marital status, and economic status.

In this chapter, therefore, the researcher will attempt to determine to what extent the above social factors influence drinking behavior among Atlanta Negroes. Because this social group has such diverse background it is dangerous to generalize about its drinking behavior in terms of family background, marital status, religion and social and economic class. But for statistical purposes an attempt will be made to

¹R. Straus and S. Bacon, Drinking in College (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953), p. 196.

delineate the role of the above social factors and the consumption of alcoholic beverages.

Drinking and Marital Status.--Of the persons who participated in the drinking survey, more than three-fourths* (77.8 per cent) reported being married or having been so, while fewer than one-fourth (22.1 per cent) reported being single. In terms of sex, 13.9 per cent of the men and 8.1 per cent of the women were single. Of the married respondents, 42.4 per cent were males and 15.6 per cent were females. The divorced respondents consisted of 9.3 per cent males and 5.2 per cent females; while the ones reported being separated consisted of 3.4 per cent male and 1.7 per cent female.

In order to approximate the frequency of drinking among the different marital statuses, some standardization had to be done. In doing this, the users of alcohol were placed in two categories - occasional and regular drinkers. Regular drinkers were defined as those who drank at least three or more times a week. Those who drank less than the above amounts were designated as occasional drinkers.

The data in Table 18, show that a sizable portion, 28.3 per cent of the total population or better than one out of every four drinkers, consume some alcohol at least three times a week; while 71.6 per cent are occasional drinkers.

In terms of marital status, 8.6 per cent of the single respondents reported drinking regularly while 12.7 per cent reported drinking occasionally. By the same measure 11.5 per cent of the married respondents

*In this percentage, 14.5 per cent reported that they are divorced and 5.2 per cent who reported that they are now separated (apart from spouse without legal separation).

TABLE 18

MARITAL STATUS AND FREQUENCY OF DRINKING

Marital Status	Regular		Occasional	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Single	15	8.6	22	12.7
Married	20	11.5	80	46.2
Divorced	11	6.3	15	8.6
Separated	3	1.7	7	4.0
Total	49	28.3	124	71.6

reported drinking regularly and 46.2 per cent reported drinking occasionally.

The divorced and separated respondents accounted for only 8 per cent of the regular drinkers and 12.6 per cent of the occasional drinkers.

Family Income and Drinking.--Economic factors are important in determining the nature of many aspects of behavior. Just as a person's wealth affects his choice of a house, the clothes he wears, the people he associate with, and many other social factors, so it also influences his use of alcoholic beverages.

The data in Table 19, present an analysis of the distribution of users of alcohol according to family income. Again, the categories of regular and occasional are utilized for the purpose of denoting the frequencies of drinking.

Among the 12 per cent of the total sample whose family income was \$8,000 or more, 2.8 per cent of these were regular drinkers and 9.2

TABLE 19

FAMILY INCOME AND DRINKING FREQUENCY

Family Income	Total		Regular		Occasional	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
\$8,000 - up	21	12.0	5	2.8	16	9.2
\$4,000 - 7,999	71	40.9	23	13.2	48	27.7
0 - 3,999	81	46.7	21	12.1	60	34.6

per cent were occasional drinkers. The incidence of use seems to vary inversely with income, upward to an apex of 13.2 per cent for regular drinkers and 27.7 per cent for occasional drinkers with family incomes between \$4,000 and \$7,999. For the family income group below \$4,000, totalling 46.7 per cent, 12.1 per cent reported drinking regularly, while 34.6 per cent reported drinking occasionally.

As shown in Table 19, the percentage of drinkers decreased with a rise in the income; but the largest proportion of regular drinkers (13.2 per cent) was to be found in the middle income category.

Occupational Status and Drinking.--Closely related to family income is the type of work a person does. In fact, the family income is usually determined by the occupation of the breadwinner.

In this study the respondents were classified into several occupational categories - unskilled, skilled, clerical, sales, managerial and proprietary, technical and professional. As could be expected, some of the above designated categories seem to overlap - to some extent. Therefore, such categories are used here, basically, for statistical analyses.

An analysis of the respondents in term of occupation and frequency

TABLE 20

OCCUPATION AND FREQUENCY OF DRINKING

Occupations	Total		Regular Drinkers		Occasional Drinker	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Professional and Technical	11	6.3	8	4.6	3	1.7
Managerial and Proprietary	17	9.8	1	.5	16	9.3
Clerical and Sales	31	16.9	11	6.5	20	10.4
Skilled Workers	41	23.2	14	8.1	27	15.1
Unskilled Workers	69	40.0	15	8.7	54	31.3
Unknown	3	1.7			3	1.7

is shown in Table 20.

Observing the data presented in Table 20, one finds that the respondents classified as unskilled workers had a higher frequency of regular and occasional drinking (8.7 and 31.3 per cent, respectively) than any other category. The next highest frequency of regular and occasional drinking occurred among the skilled workers, (8.1 and 15.1 per cent, respectively). According to these data, there seems to be a correlation between drinking frequency and occupational level. Yet the possibility remains that the occupational breakdowns in Table 20, are not well scaled from a social status point of view.

According to the above data, regular drinking was most infrequent (.5 per cent) among persons in the managerial and proprietary category, but the proportion of occasional drinkers (9.3 per cent) in this category

TABLE 21

EDUCATIONAL LEVELS AND DRINKING FREQUENCY

Education	Total		Regular Drinker		Occasional Drinker	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
College (1-4 Years)	16	9.1	5	2.8	11	6.3
High School (9-12)	67	38.7	18	10.4	49	28.3
Elementary (1-8)	90	41.9	26	15.0	64	36.9

differ greatly.

Education and Drinking.--Insofar as educational level is reflected by the number of years of schooling completed, a significant correlation seems to exist between education and frequency of drinking as shown in Table 21.

The continuous correlation to be noted is the increase in the percentage of regular and occasional drinkers as one goes up the educational scale (grade school, 2.8 and 6.3 per cent, respectively; high school, 10.4 and 28.3 per cent, respectively; college, 15.0 and 36.9 per cent, respectively). It may also be noted that relatively fewer (2.8 per cent) of those with 1 - 8 years of grade school drank regularly than those in the other two categories (10.4 and 15.0 per cent), although this difference may not be statistically significant.

Assuming that educational attainment may serve as an index of socioeconomic status, the above data may be explicable in terms of social class or status differences. Relationships found in this category may

bear out the opinion that on the upper status levels drinking seems to be conventional and widely accepted. But again, this correlation could be due to chance.

Religious Affiliation and Drinking.--It is generally agreed that the emphasis placed on religion in an individual's life is related to his general behavior. Since it has been noted that some people define the use or non-use of beverage alcohol as a moral issue and since previous studies have indicated a connection between religion and drinking behavior, it was considered necessary to investigate the role of religious affiliation and beverage alcohol consumption among the respondents of this study. Some religious groups condemn the use of alcohol, while others do not see any intrinsic evil in its use. In order, therefore, to verify if the type of religious preference a person profess had any affect on his drinking behavior, each respondent was asked, "what is your religious affiliation?"

The data as shown in Table 22, indicated that there were a greater proportion of regular as well as occasional drinkers who gave the Baptist faith as their religious affiliation. For example, 12.2 per cent of the regular drinkers and 26.3 per cent of the occasional drinkers in this study were reported to be of the Baptist affiliation. Those who were affiliated with the Methodists Church were second, with 10.9 per cent of the regular drinkers and 18.4 per cent of the occasional drinkers. Next were those who were affiliated with the Episcopalian Church, with less than 1 per cent (.6 per cent) of the regular drinkers and 9.2 per cent of the occasional drinkers. An equal number of the respondents reported being affiliated with the Catholic and Presbyterian Churches.

TABLE 22

RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION AND FREQUENCY OF DRINKING

Religious Affiliation	Total		Regular Drinkers		Occasional Drinker	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Baptist	63	38.5	20	12.2	43	26.3
Methodist	48	29.3	18	10.9	30	18.4
Episcopalian	16	9.8	1	.6	15	9.2
Catholic	15	9.1	2	1.2	13	7.9
Presbyterian	15	9.1	5	3.0	10	6.1
Other	6	3.6	3	1.8	3	1.8

Those who were affiliated with the Catholic Church accounted for 1.2 per cent of the regular drinkers and 7.9 per cent of the occasional drinkers. On the other hand Presbyterians accounted for 3.0 per cent of the regular drinkers and 6.1 per cent of the occasional drinkers. Those who professed no religious affiliation or other affiliations not listed, accounted for 1.8 per cent of the regular drinkers and an equal percentage of occasional drinkers.

It was the purpose of this chapter to underline the conception that drinking is a social phenomenon, a custom. Certainly the figures presented so far would suggest that drinking or abstaining is not a way of behavior which is selected by individuals operating as separate entities unaffected by social environments. None of the respondents of this study selected their parents, their sex, or their ethnic affiliation; and few determined their religious affiliation or the income or drinking behavior of their parents. Yet these factors, especially when combined,

play a considerable role in determining what behavior is likely to be adopted.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

From this study of drinking patterns in terms of who drinks what, when, where, with whom, and how much, and at what age, it becomes increasingly clear that drinking must be viewed as a complex social and cultural phenomenon. Alcohol, of course, may be described in biochemical terms, and its ingestion has marked physiological and psychological effects. However, it cannot be denied that drinking is equally a social act. The evidence from this study and others support this conclusion.

The fact that drinking is patterned, not random, behavior is established by observed regularities in the relationship between the use of alcohol and such socially relevant factors as age, sex, ethnicity, religious affiliation, socio-economic status, and rural-urban residence. It is well established that the circumstances surrounding consumption of alcohol cannot be explained merely by the availability of beverage alcohol or by the peculiarities of individuals. Rather, the existence and persistence of regularities in response to alcohol focus attention on the cultural definitions and social expectations which underlie the response.

Drinking is herein viewed as cultural behavior, which is learned shared by members of social groups and transmitted by them to others, and therefore is subjected to the same analytical and explanatory approaches as other human behavior. This points to the "social-ness" of drinking and the extent to which it is the product of the social and

cultural systems.

Drinking is socially accepted in our society. Some persons and subgroups condemn it generally, but others only under certain conditions; but the use of alcoholic beverages is generally accepted and approved.

It is also culture that determines which persons within a given society who may use alcoholic beverages. The use of alcoholic beverages is part of the shared patterns by which a large proportion of the adult population of the United States, for example, relate themselves to one another and to the world about themselves. This does not, of course, mean that drinking is the pivotal activity around which life revolves for those who drink.

The findings of this study point to the fact that the drinking of alcoholic beverages is customary behavior varying from culture to culture and among the subgroups within a culture. In such cases the individual may determine his own behavior to some extent; but he is expected to conform generally to the cultural patterns characteristic of his social environment. For example, if an Eskimo should deviate extremely from an Eskimoan pattern and a Hawaiian from a Hawaiian, the cultural origin of the two would still be detectable.

The findings of this study emphasize the fact that variations in behavior relating to drinking are correlated with such basic social factors as family, personal association, religious affiliation, ethnic background, and economic status. It has been indicated that an individual's behavior with respect to drinking in large measures reflect the behavior pattern of his own social group; and the drinking patterns of Atlanta Negroes largely the ways of the general society.

In one way drinking may cause a unique behavior pattern. It may temporarily have an effect upon the nervous system and for a time may influence a person's total activity. According to the respondents in this study, the great majority do not drink enough for their consumption patterns to show very much effect on their behavior. However, large amounts of alcohol consumed in a short period of time may lead persons of different cultural backgrounds to act very similarly. Then, with the return of sobriety, their behavior may return to normal.

This study brought out the relative significance in molding drinking behavior of primary group forces as oppose to individual determination. This was especially evident during the early drinking years and among the female respondents. Many of the female respondents reported drinking simply to please their husbands.

In this study it was found that 72 per cent of the persons contacted reported using alcoholic beverages to some extent. Such a figure taken by itself is likely to be misleading. It is likely to be used with the implicit or explicit assumption that this proportion of Atlanta Negroes drink alcoholic beverages. It cannot be said to what degree the above percentage is a reliable representation of the population. Therefore, since a more extensive sampling of the population might well show the assumption to be far from factual, it is reported with caution.

Over half of the respondents, 59 per cent, who reported drinking beverage alcohol received their first drink from a member of their nuclear family - father, mother, brother or sister. The great majority were between ten and nineteen years of age. Almost half of them, 49.4 per cent, started drinking on their own during these early years. Of this group, 40.7 per cent were males. This indicate that men start

drinking at a much earlier age than women.

A majority of the respondents, 62 per cent, said that their drinking habits had not changed since they began to drink. Slightly more than one-third of them reported that there have been some changes in their drinking behavior. More than half, 54.6 per cent, of those who have noticed some changes in their drinking habits said that they now drink more. Most, 92 per cent, of those who noticed this change in their drinking habits were men.

Findings on the frequency of drinking and amount consumed indicated that the proportion of Atlanta Negroes who drank frequently and heavily was very small. For example, about 2.4 per cent of the respondents reported using alcohol each day of the week while 6.6 per cent reported using it less than once a month. Of the 2.4 per cent who reported using beverage alcohol each day, all were men; while women accounted for the greater percentage, 5.4 per cent, of those who drank less than once a month. Only about one-fifth of the respondents reported using alcohol three to five times per week.

It was found that most of the respondents, 58.7 per cent, reported using beer when asked, "what kind of alcoholic beverage do you use most?" Whiskey was the second most frequently used beverage. Wine only accounted for four per cent of the respondents who reported using it frequently.

Among the respondents who preferred beer, 42.4 per cent of them were men while 16.3 per cent were women. With whiskey, 22 per cent of the men and 14.5 per cent of the women reported using it most of the time. Only four per cent of the men and none of the women reported using wine frequently.

In terms of quantity, it was noted that of those who used beer, only, 7.3 per cent of the men and 4.2 per cent of the women consumed what was arbitrarily termed "larger" amounts. Of those who drank wine, only 1.6 per cent of the men and none of the women consumed "larger" amounts. Of the respondents who use whiskey, 20.2 per cent of the men and only 2.4 per cent of the women consumed "larger" amounts. Furthermore, a substantial segment of the population who used "larger" amounts drank infrequently.

Most drinking was done at home. In fact, almost 85 per cent of the respondents reported doing most of their drinking in private homes, either their own or those of friends.

More people, 78.1 per cent, drank on weekends and holidays than at any other time. A significantly greater proportion of men, 50.5 per cent, did most of their drinking on the weekend than was true of women, 21.7 per cent.

It was recognized from the outset that the reasons for drinking would be difficult to obtain. It was possible that this might be due to the desire of the respondents to provide a reply which was approved, or to the well known fact that one does not know exactly why he drinks. While the above limitations hold true, an attempt has been made to analyze the reasons why the respondents drank alcoholic beverages.

The reasons they gave were presented in terms of two main classifications - social and individual. The social reasons were those in which the respondents attributed their drinking mainly to the stimulus of the social situation. The individual reasons were those in which the respondents attributed the main reason to the pleasurable effect or

consequences of their drinking. On the total replies the individual reasons slightly outnumbered the social ones.

Much more than any other single reason the respondents said they drank "to be sociable." For example, 63 per cent of the persons who drank for social reasons reported doing so "to be sociable." On the other hand, the larger percentage of respondents who drank for individual reasons reported doing so "to relax" (37.7 per cent).

The conclusions of this study lend powerful support to the notion that drinking is highly motivated by the influences of social pressures. Direct social pressures seemed to be much more influential in motivating the drinking of women than in men. For example, of the respondents who reported drinking to keep their spouse happy, all were women. On the other hand, seasoned and regular drinkers tended to state that their reasons for drinking lay more within themselves than in the direct pressures from group situations.

The factual conclusion and explanation of the findings of this study with reference to the hypothesis and sub-hypotheses, as stated, may be briefly summarized as follows:

The individual behavior with respect to drinking large measures reflects the behavior patterns of his own social group; and the drinking patterns of Atlanta Negroes reflect the ways of the general society.

Seventy-two per cent of the persons contacted in this study used alcoholic beverages.

In terms of frequency of drinking, 21 per cent are "regular" drinkers and 78.7 per cent are "occasional" drinkers.

Almost three times as many men, 15.6 per cent, as women, 5.4 per cent,

are "regular" drinkers.

More than half of the respondents, 58.7 per cent, reported beer as the most frequently used alcoholic beverage.

Most users of alcoholic beverages reported drinking a "medium" amount of beer, a "smaller" amount of wine, or a "medium" amount of whiskey at a sitting.

Both men and women consumed more alcohol at a sitting when drinking whiskey than when drinking wine; but when drinking beer more women drank more at a sitting than when drinking whiskey.

Most of the respondents, 85 per cent, did most of their drinking in private homes, either their own or those of friends.

More persons, 78.1 per cent, drank on weekends and holidays than at any other time.

More than any other single reason, the users of alcoholic beverages reported drinking "to be sociable."

An attempt has been made to present and analyze the collected data about the use of alcoholic beverages among Atlanta Negroes. It has been pointed out that the determining factors involved in the use of alcoholic beverages is cultural. This does not mean that other factors - physical, biological, and psychological - are not involved. To some extent, they all enter into the total situation.

Culture exerts a far-reaching influence upon the habits, customs, and practices of the people in any society. Some individuals continue to have racist theories relative to the drinking of alcoholic beverages. They believe race is an important factor in the use of alcohol. These beliefs and myths are being dispersed and eliminated through scientific

social research.

Drinking behavior is not determined by such qualities as race. We have heavy drinkers and light drinkers; we have fighting drinkers and passive, and peaceful drinkers, within every race..... The same people socially and genetically may be divided into different groups with different cultures, thus behave very differently in similar situations..... Drinking habits are rather a question of the social condition which are reflected through the individual and his behavior.¹

¹Donald Horton, "The Function of Alcohol in Primitive Societies" Quarterly Journal of Studies on Alcohol (September, 1945), 170-171.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES, HISTORICAL DATA, AND CONCLUSIONS CONCERNING THE NEGRO AND ALCOHOL IN AMERICAN CULTURE

There have been many theories concerning the reasons people drink alcohol. The use of alcohol varies from country to country and among people living in the same country. "The use of alcoholic beverages in a group or society is primarily a cultural phenomenon and it is in the light of the culture of the group or society that the use of such beverages are to be understood."¹ "Social tradition and social pressures are among the extremely important factors involved in the use of alcoholic beverages, irrespective of the degree to which they may be used."²

The drinking customs of Europe were brought to the American colonies by the first settlers and the use of alcoholic beverages was universally accepted and approved by the colonists.³ From an early period in the history of the country, Indians, Negroes and servants were prohibited from drinking alcoholic beverages. Free Negroes were permitted to use alcohol from the Colonial period until the early part of the nineteenth, in the South. During the early nineteenth century the fear that free Negroes would encourage and assist slaves to revolt or rebel

¹Charles Patrick, Alcohol, Culture, and Society (Durham: Duke University Press, 1952), p. 5.

²Ibid., pp. 59-61.

³John Larkins, Alcohol and the Negro: Explosive Issues (Zebulon, N. C.: Record Publishing Co., 1965), p. 235.

against their masters resulted in their being prohibited the use of alcohol. By the middle of the century, the status of the free Negro had deteriorated to the extent that the distinction between them and slaves was hardly discernible.¹

After the colonies became status, slaves were prohibited the use of alcohol without permission of their masters. In most of the South, there were two times in the year when masters permitted their slaves to drink and relax - after the Summer crop had been harvested and at Christmas.²

The beliefs concerning the Negro's irresponsibility and love of alcohol continued after the Civil War. General Robert E. Lee stated that "Negroes as a race were spendthrifts and gullible, though some were amenable to the advice to save their money. They were easily influenced by peddlers and store keepers.... They also had a great liking for tobacco and whiskey."³ Having been denied whiskey while in slavery, they gave full reign to their appetite in freedom. With little experience in self control, they would spend their last piece of money for a drink of whiskey.⁴

At the beginning of the twentieth century, there was increasing concern over the excessive use of alcohol by the total population. And

¹Ibid., p. 236.

²Ibid., p. 235.

³E. Merton Coulter, The South During Reconstruction, Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1949), Vol. 8, p. 49.

⁴Ibid., p. 336.

there had been little or no change in the beliefs of the whites about the Negro's use of alcohol. Even some of the Negro leaders expressed concern over their drinking. At a meeting of religious and educational leaders, a Negro Minister stated, "Drink has hurt us socially. If there is one thing to which we may attribute our present Social Status, it is to the drink habit."¹ Another minister observed that, "The Negro had been taught that strong drinks would import strength to him and he would be able to satisfy his employer. This idea was false in its conception and practice. We find by observation that it still obtains among our people today to a great extent."²

On the basis of his findings, a pioneer in the study of Negro life advanced the following theories.

Drunkenness is considered one of the chief causes of direct aggressive criminal acts and may almost be said to be a special tendency of the Negro /sic/ of the present generation. Among the chief circumstances which are believed to lead directly to the criminality of the Negro are idleness and the use of intoxicating drink and general ignorance.³

Prior to and during World War I, there was a mass migration of Negroes from rural to urban areas in the South. At the same time, there was a steady stream of Negroes from the South to the North and the Midwest. On their arrival in the cities, they were able to escape from the system of conformity required of them in the rural South. This resulted

¹I. Garland and J. W. E. Bowen, The United Negro: His Problems and Progress (Atlanta: D. E. Luther Publishing Co., 1902), p. 266.

²Ibid., p. 245.

³Howard W. Odum, Social and Mental Traits of the Negro (New York: Columbia University Press, 1910), pp. 187-189.

in more personal freedom. Many of these Negroes used their new freedom to indulge in the excessive use of alcohol. Because they were ignorant of the rules which govern living in large cities, an increasing number of colored people were arrested for drunkenness, in the 1920's.¹

An outstanding sociologist and authority on Negro life has offered a theory that "excessive drinking and sex seem to provide a means of narcotizing the middle-class against a frustrating existence. A social function is hardly considered a success unless a goodly number of the participants 'pass out'."² According to Kardiner and Ovesey, there are strong needs for compensatory activities among the lower classes, and these activities are made less traumatic through alcohol and drugs.³ In the activities the male predominates. Narcotics have wide use among Negroes; but their high cost makes alcohol much more available.⁴

People give many reasons for using alcohol: "it makes them feel good; like the taste; practically everybody in their group drink; a small drink before meals give a better appetite; when tired and worn out it relaxes; it helps to make them forget worries and unpleasant experiences; it enables them to make better conversation. These reasons comprise a part of the interpretation of what individuals feel they receive

¹Louise V. Kennedy, The Negro Peasant Turns Cityward (New York: Columbia University Press, 1930), p. 188.

²E. Franklin Frazier, Black Bourgeoisie (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1957), pp. 231-232.

³Abram Kardiner and Lionel Ovesey, The Mark of Oppression (New York: W. W. Norton Co., 1951), pp. 313-314.

⁴Ibid.

or expect to receive from drinking."¹

The reasons for using alcohol may be largely divided into four categories which provide the general motives for drinking:

1. Alcoholic beverages maybe used as condiments or thirst-quenching drinks or simply to add color at meals and social gatherings.
2. Alcoholic beverages maybe used because of the feeling of exaltation which they induce. In such a case the desire may be heighten fun and enthusiasm, release inhibition, socialize or celebrate.
3. Alcoholic beverages maybe used because of the narcotic, or depressant effect which they produce. Here the desire may be for an escape from something, to banish anxieties and frustration, to relieve tensions, or to get relief from physical pain.
4. Alcoholic beverages maybe used because people desire to conform or feel they should conform to the social customs of using such drinks.²

A study of Negro life in a Southern community reveals that there are two distinct styles of life - the respectable and non-respectable.³ Behavior and attitudes in this with respect to whiskey, sex, family, the law, and the use of leisure time define respectability and non-

¹Patrick, op. cit., pp. 44-45.

²Patrick, op. cit., pp. 44-48.

³Hylan Lewis, Blackways of Kent (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1955), p. 4.

respectability. One characteristic of the non-respectable person is a reputation for excessive drinking or public drunkenness. The respectable person does not drink in public or frequent taverns. There is a basic distinction between the social classes - respectable and non-respectable, in this community and it is based largely upon the drinking of alcoholic beverages. The respectable persons are concerned with reputation and status. They choose their drinking companions and tend to confine their drinking to their home. The non-respectable drink publicly and with anyone. They are likely to have an arrest record for public drunkenness, and are proud to make fools of themselves. Public release and indulgence in the use of alcoholic beverages is frowned upon by the respectables.¹

The authors of a study of Negro life in a Metropolis of the Midwest, also discovered a class system. The Negro class structure is stratified or divided into upper, middle, and lower. The standard behavior of the upper class approximates that of the white middle class. One of the characteristics of this class is a restrained good time.² They seldom drink excessively and usually not in public. The pattern of behavior of the middle class is largely concerned with putting up a front of respectability, and a drive for getting ahead. All this is reflected in their standard of living and public behavior. As a result, they are careful in their use of alcoholic beverages. The middle-class Negro sees nothing wrong in enjoying life and drinking, during his leisure time.³ The lower

¹Ibid., p. 204.

²St. Clair Drake and Horace Cayton, Black Metropolis (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1945), p. 531.

³Ibid., p. 714.

class is characterized by less restraint and without the symbols of higher social prestige. The pattern of their use of alcoholic beverages vary from those of the upper and middle classes. The members of the lower class drink excessively; they are habitual drinkers of illicit liquor, and they drink whiskey publicly out of a bottle. In their public behavior, they are boisterous. Both men and women appear on the street drunk.¹

Although, Negroes drink alcoholic beverages along social class lines, there are some characteristics which are largely indigenous to them. Usually special groups have a national or special drink - English, poles, Italians, French and even American hillbillies - but the American Negro does not.²

On the basis of available data, Larkins in his study of "Alcohol and the Negro" states his conclusions as follows:

Negroes use alcohol for the same reasons as the rest of the population. There are not any racial factors related to drinking. The determining factor involved in the use of alcoholic beverages is culture. The members of any group or society ordinarily use alcoholic beverages only because such beverages have been set up by social definition and social sanction as a mean by which certain needs and desires may be met. The pattern of use of alcoholic beverages are influenced by social class. Whether it be in New York or Los Angeles, Philadelphia or Oregon, New Orleans or Boston, Atlanta or Pittsburgh, the Negro is predominantly a weekend drinker. Negroes.... purchase expensive or high-priced alcoholic beverages, especially middle-class Negroes, largely as a status symbol.Negroes have been denied access to many places of recreation and restricted in the use of hotels, bars, and clubs offering entertainment. This has forced them to do a considerable amount of their entertaining at home. In order

¹Ibid., pp. 561-562.

²Larkins, op. cit., p. 244.

to show their affluence, the middle and upper classes serve costly foods and alcoholic beverages. It must be remembered that like others in the population Negroes started out with ambitions and hopes and the willingness to go on and on in their pursuit of success. More than most others, their way of life is roughened and obstructed from birth to death by the factor of race. Race may not dominate but at least it throws a shadow across every phase of the Negro's life in the North and envelops every aspect of it in the South.¹

¹Ibid., p. 245.

APPENDIX II

QUESTIONNAIRE

The purpose of this questionnaire is to gather data concerning the patterns of drinking alcoholic beverages among Negroes in the Atlanta community. Any information that you are able to render shall be greatly appreciated.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Sex: Male_____ Female_____
2. Marital Status: Single_____ Married_____ Divorced_____ Separated_____
3. How long have you been living in Atlanta? _____
4. Do you consider Atlanta your home? Yes_____ No_____
5. In what age category do you fall?

under -- 24_____	45 -- 49_____
25 -- 29 _____	50 -- 54_____
30 -- 34 _____	55 -- 59_____
35 -- 39 _____	60 -- 64_____
40 -- 44 _____	65 -- up_____
6. What is the highest grade you completed in school?

Grammar - 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 - High School - 9 10 11 12
College - 1 2 3 4 5 Other_____
7. What kind of work do you do?_____
8. Approximately, what is the weekly or monthly income of your family?

9. How many people are there in your family?_____

- (a) How many work and contribute to the family income? _____
- (b) How many children have you? _____
10. Do you own your home? Yes _____ No _____
11. What is your religious affiliation?
- | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| Baptist _____ | Episcopalian _____ |
| Methodist _____ | Catholic _____ |
| Presbyterian _____ | Other _____ |
12. About how much do you spend for food each week? _____
13. About how much do you spend on alcohol per week? _____

DRINKING PATTERNS

14. Can you recall who gave you your first taste of an alcoholic beverage? (In this study, alcoholic beverages refers only to beer, wine, bourbon, scotch, gin, vodka, brandy and rum.)
- Yes _____ No _____ if yes, who? _____
- About how old were you? _____
15. You started drinking on your own at what age? _____
16. Would you say that your habit with regards to drinking alcoholic beverages has changed since you started drinking on your own?
- Yes _____ No _____ If yes, how have they changed? _____
- _____
17. About how often do you drink beer?
- | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| each day _____ | 2 - 3 times a month _____ |
| 3 - 5 times a week _____ | Once a month _____ |
| 1 - times a week _____ | Less than once a month _____ |
18. About how often do you drink wine?
- | | |
|----------------|---------------------------|
| each day _____ | 2 - 3 times a month _____ |
|----------------|---------------------------|

3 - 5 times a week_____ 2 - 3 times a month_____

1 - 2 times a week_____ Less than once a month_____

19. About how often do you drink whiskey? (In this study whiskey refers only to bourbon, scotch, gin, vodka, brandy and rum.)

each day_____ 2 -3 times a month_____

3 - 5 times a week_____ Once a month_____

1 - 2 times a week_____ Less than once a month_____

20. What kind of alcoholic beverages do you use most?

Wine_____

Scotch_____

beer_____

gin_____

bourbon_____

vodka_____

brandy_____

rum_____

21. Which one of the following do you use most?

bourbon_____

gin_____

scotch_____

vodka_____

brandy_____

rum_____

Why?_____

22. Have you ever used home-made corn whiskey? Yes_____ No_____

If yes, on what occasions?_____

23. About how much beer do you drink at one sitting?

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, or more glasses.

24. About how much wine do you drink at one sitting?

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, or more glasses.

25. About how many drinks of bourbon, scotch, gin, vodka, brandy, or rum do you take at one sitting?

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, or more drinks.

26. On what occasion do you usually drink each kind of alcoholic beverage? _____
27. On what occasion do you do most of your drinking? _____

28. Where do you do most of your drinking?
 Home _____ Bars _____
 Friends Home _____ Night Clubs _____
 Other (Specify) _____
29. Have you ever taken a drink because others were drinking (at a party or other special occasion)? Yes _____ No _____ If yes, on what occasion? _____
30. About how often do you go to bars _____, Taverns _____, or night clubs _____? Other (specify) _____
 With whom do you go? _____

ATTITUDE TOWARD THE USAGE OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

31. For yourself, where would you set the limit on what is the proper amount to drink? _____
32. Have you ever been criticized for your drinking? Yes _____ No _____
 If yes, was it for drinking too much or too little? _____
 By whom? _____
33. Do you ever feel critical toward any of your friends or relatives for drinking too much? _____
34. Do you ever worry about your own drinking habits? Yes _____ No _____
 If yes, in what way? _____

35. How do your present drinking habits compare with those of your father? _____
36. Would your parents approve of your present drinking habits, assuming that they knew all about them? Yes _____ No _____
37. When you have a drink, do you expect to experience any sensations other than those of taste? Yes _____ No _____
If yes, what effects do you anticipate? _____
38. Have you ever seen anyone who had so much to drink that he could not control his actions? Yes _____ No _____
If so, on what occasions? _____
39. How many drinks do you need to get drunk?
Beer _____, Wine _____, Whiskey (bourbon, scotch, gin, vodka) _____
40. Have you ever been drunk, tight, or high? Yes _____ No _____
If no, have you ever wanted to get drunk, tight, or high? Yes _____
No _____
41. Have you ever pulled a blank? (that is, awakened in the morning after a party with no idea where you had been or what you had done after a certain point.) Yes _____ No _____
42. Have you ever gone on a bender? (for example, stayed drunk for at least two days but not counting Saturday and Sunday, without regard for your family or anything else.) Yes _____ No _____
43. When do you do most of your drinking?
Weekends _____ Holidays _____ Others _____
44. What would you say are your main reasons for drinking? _____

45. In your drinking of whiskey, do you prefer a particular type?

Yes_____ No_____

If yes, what type? scotch_____ gin_____

bourbon_____ vodka_____

rum_____ brandy_____

Other (specify_____

46. Do you prefer any particular brand of scotch, bourbon, gin, vodka,

etc.? Yes_____ No_____ If yes, what brand?_____

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